media reports about irregular recruitment of ex-Servicemen from India for security related duties in Iraq.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Several steps have been taken to regulate emigration to Iraq which include, *inter alia*, imposing of a complete ban on emigration clearance to Iraq w.e.f. 15.04.2004 and temporary suspension of emigration clearance to ex-Servicemen for deployment as security guards or for other security related duties in Jordan, Kuwait and UAE.

(e) As per information collected so far, approximately 5042 Indians had entered Iraq, legally and illegally, out of which 11 reportedly died there.

Indo-Bangladesh joint operation to detect rebel camps

*156. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Bangladesh had turned down India's request for conducting joint operations to detect rebel camps and hunt down insurgents using that country as a base to carry on violence in North-Eastern States;

(b) if so, on what grounds; and

(c) Governments reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Meeting of Foreign Minister with Sri Lankan Counter Part

*157. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he met recently his Sri Lankan counter part in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the points discussed; and

(c) the action taken on the suggestions made in the meeting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar had a meeting with the External Affairs Minister in New Delhi on 31st May, 2004. During the meeting, the Foreign Minister briefed the External Affairs Minister on the status of the peace